



SAFETY ALERT

Side-by-Side Rollover

WHAT HAPPENED?

This Safety Alert has been issued after a Side-by-Side (SxS) rollover resulted in the tragic loss of a team of dogs and had the potential for serious harm injuries to the operator. The incident highlights the risks of not taking the time to **“Stop, Think, Do”** so that routine tasks are performed safely.

WHY DID IT HAPPEN?

A team had been drenching and weighing lambs all day. A shepherd went ahead of the flock to set gates and take some lambs away.

He drove a SxS up to the gates at the top of a hill, engaged the foot brake, but not the hand brake, and got out to open the gate. He heard the brake disengage and tried to get back in the SxS to ‘try and save it’, but the vehicle was already out of control.

The SxS rolled over 200m down the hill and overturned multiple times resulting in the deaths of two dogs, four more dogs in serious condition at the vets, and the loss of the SxS.

The shepherd wasn't carrying the radio on him – it was on the dashboard – and was unable to immediately call for help.

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND?

Key Lessons

- Make sure your vehicle is safely stopped every time before you get out. This means being at a complete stop, and engaging the brakes properly.
- When stopping on a hill, turn the wheels up hill (or towards something solid) to limit the travel distance if the brakes fail.
- Be aware of the risks when performing routine tasks and be in the habit of doing routine tasks the safe way every time.
- Always carry your radio, cell-phone and PLB on you at all times. Not on the dashboard or glovebox.
- Never try to get in or out of a moving vehicle. It is especially dangerous to attempt to get back into a ‘runaway vehicle’ and get it under control.

Conversations Worth Having

The shepherd was in the 11th hour of his shift when the incident happened. Although he had taken his morning and lunch breaks, the team had decided to work through to completion and did not take an afternoon break.

Staff are most at risk of making errors:

- Mid-morning and mid-afternoon (when fatigue levels have risen, and nutrition levels have fallen);
- After the eight hour point of any shift;
- After the fourth day at work;
- In the first few weeks after taking holidays (when they are getting their mind back in the game).

Managers and staff are reminded ease back into work when returning from the holiday season and maintain a safe environment, including:

- Minimising staying late to complete tasks.
- Keeping to rest & meal breaks – resist the urge to work through and knock off early.